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EDUCATION WEEK

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School Workers Eligible for Aid In Jobless Law

Districts Fear Impact If States Back Benefits

By Mark Pitsch and Daniel Gursky

School-district officials across the country are bracing for possible battles in their respective statehouses over legislation that could leave districts paying out hundreds of thousands—perhaps millions—of dollars annually in unemployment benefits.

At issue is a little-known provision contained in the federal unemployment-compensation bill signed by President Bush last November. It gives states the option of making nonprofessional school personnel—such as bus drivers, maintenance workers, and food-service workers—eligible for unemployment compensation during the summer months when they are not employed by their school districts.

"It's [potentially] devastating. There's no other way to say it," said Laurie A. Westley, the chief legislative counsel for the National School Boards Association.

"There are schools that are having a hard time keeping their athletics programs, keeping their music programs," she said, "and then you add [a payout of] $8 million or $9 million—there isn't discretionary money left."

District administrators, school-board officials, and representatives of the N.S.B.A. and the American Association of School Administrators said that local districts would be required to reimburse fully the federal unemployment-insurance fund should the school workers be granted the summertime benefits.

Typically, private-sector employers pay a percentage of their employees' wages into the federal fund. State and local govern-

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John Booz

Tonya Ross, right, believes that her certificate from Harlem High School in Rockford, Ill., helped her land her job in a doctor's office.

Putting Graduates Under 'Warranty' Gains Favor in Districts and States

By Meg Sommerfeld

An increasing number of school districts, as well as a handful of states, are seeking to restore public and business confidence in education by issuing "warranties" on their graduates.

Under such policies—which some observers dismiss as low-cost public-relations gimmicks—schools promise to take graduates back for remediation if their employers find them lacking in certain requisite skills.

At least 50 school districts have adopted the guarantees since the idea surfaced in the late 1980's, according to Melodye Bush, an information specialist at Education Commission of the States. At least two states, West Virginia and Colorado, are implementing warranty programs on a statewide basis, and a number of others, including New Jersey and Indiana, have policies under consideration.

The concept attracted new attention last November, when Superintendent William R. Anton of the Los Angeles Unified School District announced that the district, the nation's second largest, would guarantee the skills of its graduates starting with the class of 1994. *(See Education Week, Nov. 13, 1991.)*

The country's largest school district, the New York City system, will decide by the end of the current academic year whether to introduce a similar initiative, Kim Bohen, a spokesman for Schools Chancellor Joseph A. Fernandez, said last month.

Such moves are most important as a

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'Supply Side' Reform or Voucher? Charter-School Concept Takes Hold

By Lynn Olson

Advocates bill it as a way to introduce diversity and autonomy into public education. Critics call it a subsidy for private schools.

But one thing is clear: Few people are neutral about a new Minnesota law that encourages licensed teachers to start and run their own independent public schools under contract or "charter" with a local school board.

The first such charter school was approved by the state board of education last month and could open as early as this fall. More than a dozen other proposals are under discussion as well. *(See Education Week, Nov. 27, 1991.)*

Sponsors argue that, by breaking school boards' monopoly on starting up and running public schools, the new law will be a "supply side" reform that will expand educational choices for students and free teachers from oppressive rules and regulations.

But the concept has been adamantly opposed by members of Minnesota's education establishment, who view it as a backdoor attempt to introduce private-school vouchers.

"It's generating more discussion sooner than I had expected," said State Representative Becky Kelso, one of the law's sponsors. "And it's every bit as controversial as I had feared."

While it continues to spur debate in Minnesota, the charter-schools idea also is spreading to other parts of the nation. Law-

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Study Shows a Rise In the Segregation of Hispanic Students

By Peter Schmidt

WASHINGTON—Hispanic students by most measures have become more segregated than blacks in American schools, according to a study released last week by the National School Boards Association.

For African-Americans, the study found, the degree of school segregation has remained fairly stable since the early 1970's.

The report, an analysis of federal and state data commissioned by the N.S.B.A.'s Council of Urban Boards of Education, warns that current trends point toward more isolation of both black and Hispanic students in the future if problems of segregation in suburbs as well as inner cities are not addressed.

"We now have Hispanic ghettos and barrios where virtually all of the students in the classroom are Hispanic," Gary Orfield, one of the study's authors, said in releasing the findings at a press conference here. He called Hispanic segregation "a major national problem."

Although little is known about the im-

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Experts Uncertain About Impact of Disabilities Act on Schools

By Debra Viadero

A new federal law designed to break down barriers for disabled people could lead to changes in way the nation's public and private schools do business.

Unfortunately, legal and educational experts are not sure what those changes might be.

Hailed as a victory for the country's 43 million disabled people, the Americans With Disabilities Act essentially bars all forms of discrimination against the handicapped.

Most public and private employers, for example, will be prohibited from discriminating against the disabled in their hiring and promotion practices. Also, "places of public accommodation" will have to make sure disabled persons can easily use their facilities and services. Organizations that fail to comply may find themselves vulnerable to lawsuits.

The new law, parts of which take effect on Jan. 26, is primarily targeted at private businesses and institutions, including private schools. For the most part, those entities have never been covered under previous laws banning discrimination against the disabled.

Most public schools, like all agencies that receive federal funds, already have to ensure they do not discriminate against the disabled

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David Fahleson

Rachel Gutierrez gets a hand from her principal, Meredith Wedin, at the T.H. Rogers School in Houston.

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A round of protests leads Lamar Alexander to search for funds to restore a popular school-recognition program.

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High-school athletes heading for college will have to post better grade-point averages in more courses under new rules passed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association last week. **Page 4.**

Reform Versus Busing
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Mayor Under Fire
Mayor John O. Norquist of Milwaukee is drawing fire for a published article in which he advocates the eventual end of public school systems in urban areas. **Page 5.**

Easing Day-Care Rules
The Internal Revenue Service has issued a ruling making it easier for family day-care providers to claim a business deduction on their federal income-tax returns. **Page 8.**

Child Care and Welfare
A federal judge has ruled that California must provide child-care services to welfare clients who are enrolled in state-approved education and training activities. **Page 9.**

Unprotected Children
Employer-provided health-insurance plans are increasingly less likely to provide coverage for children, a new Children's Defense Fund study asserts. **Page 10.**

Lone Star Cash Crunch?
Texas school officials are concerned that some businesses may not pay their property taxes this month in hopes that the state supreme court will strike down the state's school-finance law. **Page 20.**

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ACROSS THE NATION

NATIONAL

Study Says Most Runaway Youths Were Physically, Sexually Abused

More than 60 percent of runaway and homeless teenagers in shelters and transitional-living facilities were physically or sexually abused by their parents, the results of a national survey show.

The study, based on a survey of 170 federally funded agencies that provide basic shelter and other services to runaway and homeless youth, found that many of these teenagers have longstanding problems that would make it difficult for them ever to return home.

The survey was conducted by the National Association of Social Workers under a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The study found that 38 percent of the teenagers had been in foster care some time during the previous year, that 20 percent had come from directly from a foster or group home, and that 11 percent had been living on the street before coming to a shelter.

According to the survey, 29 percent of the teenagers reported having parents who had problems with alcohol; 24 percent of the parents were drug abusers. The teenagers, whose average age was 15, often had their own mental and social problems to contend with as well. One-fifth of the adolescents reported having attempted suicide, one-quarter had mental-health problems, and 23 percent were drug abusers, the study found.

Workers at more than 80 percent of the shelters said that the problems faced by runaways have changed over the years. Today's problems include more drug and alcohol abuse by both parents and children, greater economic problems, and more mental-health and school-related problems. ■

STATES

Illinois High Schools Get Tougher Student-Recruitment Regulations

Tougher restrictions on the recruitment of grade-school and junior-high athletes will be imposed on Illinois high schools beginning July 1.

The Illinois High School Association last month voted to expand and elaborate on its definition of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable practices of attracting students. The current definition merely prohibits the use of "undue influence" to secure or retain the attendance of a student.

David Fry, the executive director of the high-school association, said the group based its decision in part on the recommendations of a special committee formed to improve the relationships among various factions that perceived inequities between public and nonpublic member schools.

The new rules are also expected to prevent many of the abuses that have been witnessed or documented in recent years. In a recent series, *The Chicago Tribune* recounted the pervasive use of questionable tactics to lure grade-school students to particular high schools.

"We want to build a barrier that protects kids and high-school athletics against the . . . abuses," said Mr. Fry.

One new provision curtails the role of high-school coaches in dealing with pre-high-school youths. Another forbids high schools to place an overemphasis on their athletic programs at the expense of academic and other extracurricular programs during presentations to children in the lower grades.

New York State Teachers Charge Sex Bias in Pension System

A group of nearly 1,200 teachers in New York State has filed a complaint with the state's equal-employment-opportunity commission asking for an investigation of whether the New York Teachers' Retirement System discriminates against women.

New York's four-tiered pension plan reduces benefits for teachers who leave their positions temporarily to care for children or aging parents, or who leave the state to follow a spouse who is changing jobs. Upon their return, the teachers are placed in a lower tier of the pension plan, causing them to lose an estimated $8,000 to $11,000 annually in retirement benefits, according to Lisa Maurer, a lawyer representing the coalition of complainants, all of whom are currently teaching.

"In a system where the overwhelming majority are women," the affidavit reads, "this pension plan conforms to and rewards the male work pattern" of uninterrupted long-term service for a single employer.

The complainants seek to recover prior contributions they made to the retirement system, which are estimated at more than $14 million, and another $3.5 million annually until their retirements to bring them to the level of top-tier benefits

■ **The Nevada Supreme Court has overturned a lower-court ruling and ordered a trial in an educational-malpractice case filed against a Washoe County private school.**

The high court, in a 5-to-0 ruling, last month held that there were enough facts to support a claim of breach of contract and misrepresentation against Cambridge School by Bonnie and Burke Squires on behalf of their son Brandon.

The court did not rule on the educational-malpractice claim itself.

The parents, who enrolled the boy in the private school specifically because they feared he might have trouble learning to read, maintain that the school exposed Brandon to inexperienced teaching interns.

In addition, they charge, the school failed to notify them of any reading problems for four years until they received a fourth-quarter report recommending that Brandon repeat the 2nd grade.

Brandon, who has been identified as extremely bright, subsequently enrolled in a public school only to be retained because of his poor reading skills. As of February, he was a 12-year-old 4th grader, court documents said.

The boy alleges injury to his mental and emotional development, according to the court ruling, and his parents allege monetary damages in the form of wasted tuition and the cost of three years of private tutoring. ■

DISTRICTS

Ohio District Faces Heavy Losses In Tax Settlement With G.M.

The General Motors Corporation and the Ontario, Ohio, school district have settled a tax dispute that will end up costing the district more than $1 million in back taxes and an annual loss of more than $135,000.

The corporation challenged the appraised value of its Ontario-Mansfield plant before a local board of tax appeals in 1987. When that board ruled in the favor of the school district, G.M. appealed to a state-level appeals board.

The district and the corporation agreed on a settlement, however, under which the the value of the G.M. plant is reduced from $52 million to $46.7 million for the tax years from 1987 to 1989, and to $36.3 million for the tax years 1990 to 1995.

Under the settlement, the district, which receives 70 percent of the real-estate and personal-property taxes G.M. pays on the plant, must repay more than $316,000 in back taxes for 1987 through 1990. In addition, the district will lose nearly $400,000 in other taxes for various years and more than $135,000 per year for tax years 1990 to 1995.

The district's superintendent, Gregg Morris, said he was "very disappointed by

An Urban Monument

Todd Buchanan/Philadelphia Inquirer

Members of a Philadelphia group called the Anti-Graffiti Network add names to a mural dedicated to children who have died in urban violence since August 1990.

Shrinking Number of Children Found Covered by Employer Health Insurance

By Ellen Flax

WASHINGTON—Employer-provided health insurance—the primary form of health insurance for most Americans—is increasingly less likely to provide coverage for children, the results of a new study show.

The report, completed by a Washington-based advocacy group, the Children's Defense Fund, found that almost 40 percent of all children, or 25 million youngsters under the age of 18, are not covered by health insurance through a parent's employer.

In 1977, the study says, 72.8 percent of all children were covered by health insurance through an employer-provided plan. By 1987, that proportion had dropped to 62.9 percent.

If the trend continues, the study estimates, about half of all children, and 80 percent of black children, will not be covered by employer-based health insurance by the end of the decade.

Even children who are covered under employer-sponsored plans may find their insurance to be tenuous. Over the next 28 months, due to a parent's job change, unemployment, or disability, nearly 40 percent will go without coverage at some point, the report predicts.

"The voluntary system of employer-provided health insurance is in disarray, and there is no more visible sign of its decline than the unraveling of coverage for children," Marian Wright Edelman, the president of the C.D.F., said at a press conference.

Data such as those contained in the C.D.F. report are likely to fuel an already hot election-year debate about the best ways to provide health coverage for the estimated 35 million Americans who lack any insurance. About 8.4 million children, or about 13 percent of all youngsters in the United States, have neither private nor public health coverage, according to the C.D.F.

> 40 percent not covered, up from 27 percent in 1977, C.D.F. finds.

The group attributes the declining percentage of covered children to three major trends:

- As the cost of premiums continues to rise, many employers no longer include spouses or children in their health-insurance plans;
- Many of the new jobs created during the past decade do not include any health benefits, not even for the working parent; and
- Even for parents who want to buy family health plans on their own to cover their children often find the cost prohibitive, sometimes reaching as high as $12,000 a year.

When offered the chance to buy health insurance for their children at lower group rates from their employers, about 90 percent of parents do so, the C.D.F. found. But a growing percentage of employers no longer offer parents the option, the group says.

Coverage of Minority Children

The report, which drew on data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, underscores the importance of Medicaid, which is gradually being expanded to include older children, in providing health coverage to poor youngsters.

The program covered about 11.9 million children in 1990, and, if it were not for Medicaid, the number of totally uninsured children would have more than doubled, from 8.4 million to 18.1 million, the report estimates.

At the same time, the insurance situation for children from working-poor and middle-class families continues to decline, the study found.

About 63 percent of children from working-poor families, and 83.6 percent of middle-class children, had employer-based health insurance in 1977, the report says. A decade later, 47 percent of working-poor children and 79 percent of middle-class children were still covered.

Over the same decade, children were less likely to be insured, whether or not both parents worked, only one parent worked outside the home, or they came from a single-parent family, the study found.

Black and Latino children were consistently less likely to be covered by private health insurance than white children, the report says.

In 1990, two-thirds of white children had insurance from a parent's employer; in contrast, only 40 percent of black and Latino children had such coverage.

Between 1977 and 1987, black and Latino children were more likely to lose their health insurance than white children, the study found.

Copies of "Children and Health Insurance" are available for $4.50 each, postpaid, from the C.D.F., 122 C St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

Proportion of Children with Employer Insurance, 1977-2000*

	1977	1987	2000
Total	72.8%	62.9%	50.0%
Black	52.5%	38.1%	19.4%
Two-parent, one wage earner families	83.0%	73.3%	60.7%
Low income	63.4%	47.0%	25.7%
Middle income	83.6%	79.0%	73.0%

Source: Children's Defense Fund

* Based on average annual rate of change, 1977-1987.

Most High-School Students Sexually Active, C.D.C. Finds

By Ellen Flax

More than half of all high-school students say they have had sex, according to the first federally funded national survey on the sexual behavior of 9th to 12th graders.

A majority of the sexually active students responding to the survey reported that they do not use a condom regularly, and 1 in 25 students said they have had a sexually transmitted disease.

Black students, the study conducted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control found, were more likely than white or Hispanic students to have had sex, and boys were more likely than girls to have done so.

By the time they graduate from high school, nearly three-quarters of all students have had sexual intercourse, the report says.

Federal officials have long been interested in obtaining this sort of data, because about 1 million adolescent girls become pregnant each year, and 86 percent of all sexually transmitted diseases occur among people ages 15 to 29.

But gathering such information has long been a controversial undertaking. Last summer, a federal survey solely on the sexual behavior of teenagers was canceled by U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis W. Sullivan. *(See Education Week, July 31, 1991.)*

In canceling the survey, Dr. Sullivan said he was concerned that sexually explicit questions would unintentionally send the wrong message to adolescents.

> But most of those who have had sex failed to use a condom.

Part of Broader Survey

The new study, in contrast, was part of the C.D.C.'s Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which asked a nationally representative sample of 11,631 students in grades 9 to 12 about a variety of health issues and risk behaviors.

Over the past few months, the C.D.C. has released the results of other parts of the survey concerning student drug use, suicide attempts, smoking, dieting, and exercise.

Questions were raised in some states about the propriety of asking students questions about their sexual activities. Nonetheless, the states and the C.D.C. were able to gather the information.

While the canceled survey would have asked students about both same-sex and opposite-sex behaviors, the C.D.C. survey focused only on heterosexual activities.

Older students were more likely to report that they were sexually experienced: 39.6 percent of 9th-grade students, but 71.9 percent of seniors, said they had had intercourse.

Black students, the survey found, were far more likely than white or Hispanic students to have had sex. Nearly 88 percent of the black males, and 60 percent of the black females, said they had had intercourse. In contrast, slightly more than half of all white students and Hispanic students said they had begun sexual activity.

Over all, 54.2 percent of the students reported having had sex, with 48 percent of the girls and 61 percent of the boys saying they were sexually experienced.

Nearly 40 percent of the students said they had had intercourse during the three months prior to the survey. Girls were less likely than boys to be currently sexually active: 36.4 percent of girls reported having had sex recently, compared with 42.5 percent of the boys.

Use of Contraception

Roughly 78 percent of both male and female students who reported having had sex recently said they had used some form of birth control during their most recent sex act.

Hispanic students were the least likely to report using birth control, while white students were the most likely to say that they had.

However, fewer than half of the sexually active students said they had used a condom during their most recent sex act. Black students were the most likely to report using a condom, and Hispanic students the least likely.

To reduce the incidence of teenage sex and sexually transmitted diseases, the C.D.C. in its report recommends more stringent sex-education programs.

"Education programs should provide adolescents with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to refrain from sexual intercourse," the report concludes. "For adolescents who are unwilling to refrain from sexual intercourse, programs should help to increase the use of contraceptives and condoms."

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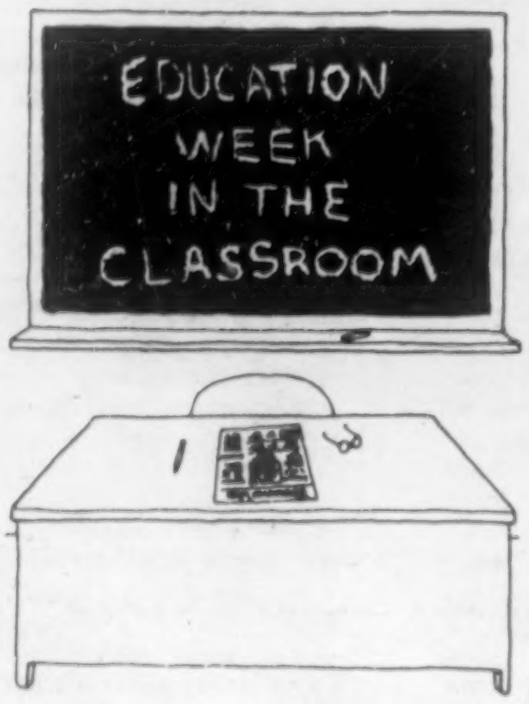

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N.S.B.A. Study Documents an Increase In the School Segregation of Hispanics

Continued from Page 1

pact of segregation on Hispanic children, researchers do know that "isolated Hispanic schools are doing very badly," said Mr. Orfield, a professor of education and social policy at Harvard University.

The report, entitled "Status of School Desegregation: The Next Generation," also found that:

- Contrary to the expectations of many educators and civil-rights activists, the policies of the Reagan Administration appear to have had little negative impact on the integration of blacks and whites in schools. The policies may, however, have significantly worsened the segregation of Hispanics.
- Only school-desegregation programs involving both cities and their suburbs have been successful in deterring "white flight."
- Asians appear to be well integrated into mostly white schools, although there is some evidence of increasing Asian segregation in Western states.

'Patterns of Isolation'

The study, released in draft form, was based on the 1990 census and 20 years of data collected by the Education Department's office for civil rights, the most recent of which were 1988 data from 40,000 schools.

Trends point to growing isolation of blacks and Hispanics.

Conducted by Mr. Orfield and Franklin Monfort, an honorary fellow at the University of Wisconsin Center for Demography, the study is the third on school desegregation undertaken by the N.S.B.A. in the past decade, and one of the first on the subject to examine such issues as segregation in large suburbs.

The federal government has not carried out a full survey on the racial composition of American schools since 1976. The inadequacy of federal data gathered since then has prevented an accurate examination of some states and several major districts, especially those located in suburbs, the new report says.

In examining Hispanic enrollment trends, the N.S.B.A. study found that the segregation of Hispanics has increased steadily as their share of the student population has grown over the past two decades, from less than 5 percent to more than 10 percent.

The average Hispanic student living in the Western region of the country saw his school go from less than half minority in 1970 to two-thirds minority by 1988.

"Hispanics in California and Texas are more segregated than blacks in Alabama or Mississippi in terms of educational experiences," Mr. Orfield said.

Nationally, Hispanic students have become more isolated than blacks by most measures. During the 1988-89 school year, for example, while about 63 percent of blacks attended schools that were less than half white, almost three-quarters of Hispanic students attended schools that were primarily minority.

"Patterns of virtually total isolation are emerging for a growing number of Hispanics, but this is not because Hispanics prefer segregation," the report says, citing a national survey by *The Boston Globe* that found four out of five Hispanics favor desegregation even if busing is required.

Residential Segregation

The report says that "the demographic trends are probably the dominant force in the increasing segregation" of Hispanic students. It notes that the Hispanic population's high immigration rates, relative youthfulness, and high fertility rates would cause them to be in contact with proportionately fewer whites even in a totally integrated U.S. society.

Even so, it points out, Hispanic segregation has taken place much faster than demographic trends should have warranted, largely due to residential segregation in areas where most Hispanics have settled.

Political resistance to busing and other programs designed mostly to integrate white and black students also appears to have had the effect of preventing government agencies from trying to integrate the nation's soaring Hispanic population, the report says.

Although the Hispanic population is largely Catholic, the authors note, it has remained overwhelmingly concentrated in public schools, even in big cities where earlier immigrant waves filled parochial schools and large percentages of white students still attend them.

Regional Trends

In the Northeast, where Puerto Ricans are the largest Hispanic group, almost 80 percent of Hispanic pupils in 1988 were in predominantly minority schools, the study found; 44 percent attended schools that were more than 90 percent minority.

In the South, 80 percent of Hispanic students attended mostly minority schools in 1988, a 5 percent rise from two years before.

The Mexican-Americans concentrated in the West and Midwest also experienced steady increases in segregation over the past two decades.

Texas and California, which accounted for 57 percent of the nation's Hispanic students during the 1988-89 school year, have both seen significant legal and political challenges to desegregation programs over the past two decades, the report notes.

Rate for Blacks More Stable

By comparison, the report says, the degree of school segregation confronted by African-Americans has remained fairly stable since 1972, despite Reagan Administration policies that were widely criticized as being intended to dismantle desegregation requirements in the South.

Federal policies during the late 1960's and early 1970's transformed schools in the South from being the most segregated to the least segregated in the nation. But the 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Milliken* v. *Bradley*, the reports says, effectively halted most further school-desegregation efforts, particularly in the North and the West, by protecting mostly white suburbs from inclusion in urban desegregation programs.

As of the 1988-89 school year, public schools with enrollments that were more than 90 percent minority educated 48 percent of black children in the Northeast, 42 percent in the Midwest, and 24 percent in the South, the report says.

No big-city district has been successful over the past two decades in stopping the movement of white residents to suburban districts with few minority students, the authors say, and cities with voluntary desegregation programs, or none at all, appear to have lost white residents as quickly as those with involuntary busing.

Only Indianapolis, Broward County, Fla., and other districts with mandatory desegregation programs involving both cities and suburbs appear to have deterred "white flight," according to the study.

More Diverse Suburbs

While the minority population of the suburbs has increased rapidly in the past two decades, few attempts have been made to prevent resegregation in the suburbs, the report says.

By 1990, it says, resegregation had emerged as a bigger problem in many suburbs, especially older ones, than in the cities they surround.

The report calls for the establishment of school and housing policies to prevent suburban segregation, as well as new federal, state, and local efforts to promote school integration.

As minorities become the majority in many districts, the report suggests, educators may also need to adopt a new definition of desegregation that includes integration between two or more minority groups.

Percentage of Hispanic Students in Predominantly Minority Schools

	1986	1988	Change
South	75.2	80.2	+5.0
Northeast	78.2	79.7	+1.5
Midwest	54.3	52.3	-2.0
West	69.9	71.3	+1.4

Percentage of Hispanic Students in 90-100 Percent Minority Schools

	1986	1988	Change
South	38.6	37.9	-0.7
Northeast	46.4	44.2	-2.2
Midwest	23.5	24.9	+1.4
West	24.7	27.5	+2.8

Source: National School Boards Association

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National Association of Partners in Education
National Center for Peak Performing Schools
National Council of States on Inservice Education
National Dropout Prevention Conference
National Education Association
National Educational Computing Conference
National School Boards Association
National School Conference Institute
Network of Performing and Visual Arts Schools
North Cook Educational Service Center
Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Orton Dyslexia Society
Our Other Youth
Outcome-Based Education Conference
Outcomes Associates
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